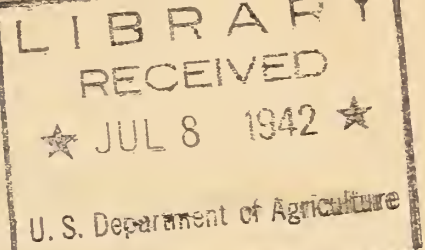


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## SEED REGULATIONS AND PRODUCTION GOALS

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There is probably not a single industry in the country that has not been directly or indirectly affected by the war. It is an easy matter to recognize the effects on those industries producing ammunitions or other war materials which are used by our combat units. But it is not so easy to recognize the effects upon industries which produce food or contribute to the production of food or the need to support such industries to the utmost as a part of our war effort.

Seeds are basic to food production. They are produced to a greater or less extent in all food-producing areas. However, there are many kinds of seeds which have to be shipped great distances, either across our own country or from other countries in order to place them where they are needed for sowing. In some cases it is impracticable to produce the seed where it is needed for sowing. In other cases such production may not be nearly so efficient in those areas as in other areas.

Before the war we were importing large quantities of certain kinds of grass and clover seeds and we exported considerable quantities of a few kinds. This situation has been affected very much by the almost entire curtailment of imports from overseas and the limitation of exports to only a few nations and even these efforts are effected under adverse conditions. Our supplies of white clover, crimson clover, ryegrasses, rapeseed, and vetches were to a large extent imported prior to the war. We are now endeavoring not only to supply the full



quantities of these kinds of seeds needed for our own consumption but also to increase our production so as to supply the United Kingdom and other United Nations with quantities which they formerly either produced or imported from axis countries. This is becoming with some seeds quite a difficult problem.

With vegetable seeds the situation has been very decidedly modified because of the war. Prior to World War I we imported immense quantities of vegetable seeds from Europe. In fact with many important items our imports were very much greater than our domestic production. After World War I we continued to produce more vegetable seeds than prior to that war but went back to the importation of considerable quantities of spinach, cabbage, beets, carrot, onion, and certain other seeds. We normally have imported practically all the cauliflower, brussels sprouts, broccoli, and certain other minor crops planted in this country.

At the opening of this war we were in much better position to attack the problem of large-scale production of vegetable seeds than in the other world war, because of experience gained and experimental work done with vegetable seed crops. But the world situation was much more critical at the opening of this war than it was with the former war, because of the absolute cutting off of supplies from any of the countries of the continent of Europe. Holland and Denmark have always been large sources of supply for certain vegetable seeds. England can now produce only a small portion of what it produced under normal conditions, and is, therefore, making far greater demands upon us for seed than ever before.

One only has to look at the goals that have been set up by the Department for domestic production of certain vegetable seeds to see that we are called upon to produce these seeds in immense quantities for shipment to other United Nations. Our average carrot-seed production for the past 3 years has been approximately 1 million pounds while our goal for 1943 is set at 3 million pounds. A

similar goal would have been set for 1942, if it could in any way have been reached but this was out of the question inasmuch as carrot is a biennial crop and the first year of production of seed in 1942 was already past. With onions our average production of the last 3 years was less one-half million pounds. We are asking the seed growers to produce 2-1/2 million pounds in 1943 and as much onion seed as they have bulbs to plant for the production of such seed in 1942. This increase of more than five times our average production for the past three years looks staggering to growers in the face of a critical labor situation on the Pacific Coast where a large part of such production was brought about by the use of Japanese and Filipino labor, and because of the greatly increased cost of production of such seed.

Though these two crops are perhaps in the most critical situation, our goals call for substantial increases in practically all the vegetable-seed crops, goals which in fact can be attained only through the cooperation of all agencies and the removal of all obstacles that stand in the way of efficient production and efficient distribution.

We have requests from all sides to alleviate regulations and requirements in such a way as to permit better distribution of seeds.

It is well known that some field and vegetable seeds are not of the highest germination and purity. With the situation as it is at present much pressure is brought to bear upon us to lower requirements as to purity and germination of seeds in order to permit the full use of all seeds produced. Such action on our part would be unwise because if there was ever a time that the farmer or gardener producing food in our war effort should have the assurance in sowing seed for the production of such food that it is of a good producing variety and of a satisfactory germination and in every way meets the qualifications for good seed, it is now. If we were to let down upon those requirements, instead of helping out in the

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present situation, we would be hindering it.

Let us think for a moment of what might be done in seed distribution that would help in the war effort in view of the situation that has been touched upon here briefly. In the purchase of seeds under Lend-Lease for the use of the United Kingdom, Russia, and Australia we have been confronted with the existence of varying requirements as to purity and germination of such seeds and of various kinds of certifications that were requested in order that those seeds might be permitted entry into those countries. In all such cases in order to handle the purchase and export of those seeds we have felt called upon to insist that all requirements of such seeds be stated in terms under the Federal Seed Act and that tests be made in accordance with the Federal Seed Act. We have set up reasonably high standards that we felt could be met and have insisted on all such seed meeting the requirements set up.

By bringing about uniformity in the handling of these exports under Lend-Lease instead of trying to adjust all the requirements to meet the particular regulations of the country to which the seeds were shipped, it has been possible for us to purchase these seeds and to make the tests of them without upsetting or disturbing our whole seed-laboratory organization or methods of offering the seed in Lend-Lease purchases. We know that this has expedited the handling of such seeds. If such measures can be made effective, to measure out the requirements for handling seeds between countries, similar measures can be adopted to alleviate the handling of seeds between States. If the Federal Seed Act were not in effect today the situation would be very different but with the Federal Seed Act in effect we have a standard to go by which protects adequately the seed passing in interstate commerce without any additional obstacles being placed in the way of the passage of such seed.

Even with the problem of noxious weeds which varies greatly in the different parts of the country, the Federal Seed Act recognizes those variations and provides that the law of the State into which the seed is shipped shall govern. Other measures which obstruct the free movement in the distribution and sale of seeds should be eliminated or removed so far as possible. I refer to such measures as States employ in their effort to control the seed shipped into the State and to control the distribution by agencies outside the State. Obviously it would be a difficult matter to modify all types of legislation to bring this about.

However, many of these things are set up by the State Departments of Agriculture under authority of the law in which cases they could either be repealed or modified to bring about easier distribution of seeds during the war period. The measures which seem particularly obstructive are those relating to special licensing procedures, special requirements which involve advance notification of shipment and special tagging on shipments into certain States, special requirements as to germination and purity, apart from those set up under the Federal Seed Act, and various other regulations or provisions of this kind.

It should be a relatively easy matter to eliminate all provisions that exist in State regulations which affect interstate commerce and instead of these depend upon the Federal Seed Act for such regulation. Some of these measures may seem minor and inconsequential in their effect upon our conduct of the war. However, in the aggregate they have a material effect upon our efficient seed production and distribution and, therefore, on our most efficient food production.

In illustration of the joint efforts of the Department and the representatives of the seed industry in trying to smooth out seed-production problems during the war, I shall mention certain examples.



The vegetable seed production committee of the United States Department of Agriculture along with a committee of the seed trade, has grouped vegetable seeds into three groups based upon their importance in connection with our war effort. Seventeen kinds are in group 1, which represents the most important, 8 kinds in group 2, and 12 kinds in group 3. No effort is made to discourage production of the crops in group 2 or 3 because we can use all of them, but special effort is being made in the cases of those in group 1 which represent 10 biennials and 7 annuals. Goals are set up for the seeds in group 1 and every effort is being made by the seed industry in cooperation with the Department to reach these goals. Another example is the joint effort of the seed industry and the Department in the standardization of production on certain major varieties and the elimination in the seed-production program of those varieties of lesser importance and little used.

With such efforts as these at the source of production, it would be undesirable to have their effectiveness diminished by obstacles in the way of effective and useful distribution. The cooperation of State institutions and State enforcement agencies with the Department in connection with all of these efforts to bring about more efficient and adequate production and distribution will do much to assist an industry that is hard pressed to meet the exigencies of our present emergency.

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